

USING GAMIFICATION AS A STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SME FLOWER VENDORS AT RAWA BELONG MARKET

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ABSTRACT

The community service activity conducted discussed the use of gamification as an innovative strategy to support the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly flower vendors at Rawa Belong Market. As a central flower trading hub in Jakarta, these vendors face challenges in adapting technology to enhance engagement with both existing and potential consumers. One technological concept that has yet to be adopted by the flower vendors is gamification, as they do not yet fully understand its concept and implementation. Therefore, this community service activity was carried out to assist flower vendors at Rawa Belong Market in explaining and implementing gamification through social media. The participants of the community service activity consisted of 26 individuals, including vendors and the leaders of flower vendor groups at Rawa Belong Market. The implementation method employed an institutional, participatory approach involving discussions and mentoring. The materials delivered covered the following topics: understanding the engagement challenge for SMEs, the attention crisis and why SMEs must compete differently, the psychology behind gamification, and practical gamification examples for SMEs. The results of the community service indicate that the flower vendors at Rawa Belong Market showed interest in using gamification to scale their businesses, and they gained a clear understanding of the concept and application of gamification through social media.

Keywords: Gamifikasi, Marketing, Technology, e-Commerce.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) constitute the backbone of Indonesia's economy. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, the number of SMEs in Indonesia has reached more than 64 million units, employing approximately 97% of the workforce and contributing over 60% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (GatotPra, 2025). This crucial role positions SMEs as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable economic growth. SMEs have the capacity to create employment opportunities, alleviate poverty, and distribute income more equitably (Meilariza et al., 2024). Furthermore, this sector has demonstrated strong resilience in the face of economic shocks, even during global crises. In the era of digitalization, SMEs are required to adapt and innovate to remain relevant and competitive (Fadlan et al., 2023). Digitalization opens new opportunities for SMEs to expand market reach, enhance operational efficiency, and build stronger relationships with customers (Hastin et al., 2024). However, the transition toward digital adoption is not always seamless, particularly for SMEs that continue to face challenges such as limited resources, insufficient digital literacy, and intense competition. Therefore, innovative strategic approaches are necessary to enable SMEs to leverage technology optimally, thereby enhancing competitiveness and fostering significant business growth (Fizzanty, 2024).

One example of SMEs facing challenges in the digital era is the flower traders operating at Rawa Belong Market, Kemanggis, West Jakarta. As one of the largest flower trading centers in Southeast Asia, Rawa Belong Market presents unique dynamics that reflect both the challenges and opportunities for SMEs within it. Based on preliminary observations, many traders have already adopted social media for promotional purposes. However, their usage of social media remains limited to mere promotional activities, whereas social media could also serve as a medium to provide unique engagement experiences for potential consumers, thereby encouraging actual purchases. One alternative utilization of social media beyond promotion is gamification. The concept of gamification refers to the application of game elements to stimulate individual interest and engagement (Santos et al., 2024). Nevertheless, flower traders at Rawa Belong Market have not yet understood the gamification concept, despite its potential benefits for their business strategies. A preliminary survey revealed that 80% of flower traders in Rawa Belong Market had no understanding of gamification. In contrast, when asked about social media marketing, most traders demonstrated substantial familiarity, and many of them had already developed websites as promotional platforms.

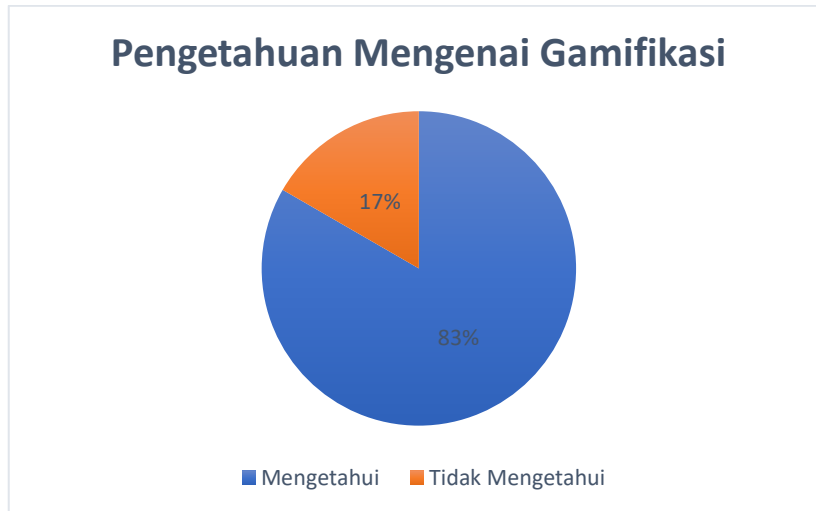


Figure 1. Pra-Survey Result

Therefore, based on the situational analysis above, this community engagement program (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat/PKM) is designed to address the utilization of gamification to enhance the business scale of flower traders at Rawa Belong Market. The initiative primarily seeks to provide traders with comprehensive knowledge and understanding of gamification, enabling them to leverage it as an innovative strategy to attract, engage, and retain customers in an increasingly competitive digital marketplace. In practical terms, the PKM program will emphasize interactive training sessions that demonstrate how game-based elements—such as points, levels, challenges, and rewards—can be effectively incorporated into digital marketing strategies and customer relationship management. These sessions are expected to move beyond theoretical knowledge by equipping traders with hands-on experience in applying gamification tools through social media platforms, mobile applications, and e-commerce websites. As a result, traders will not only acquire digital literacy but will also develop confidence in integrating gamification into their business models.



Figure 2. Rawa Belong Market

2. METHOD

The implementation method of this community engagement program (PKM) employs an institutional, participatory, discussion-based, and mentoring approach. All of these approaches were integrated by the PKM team into a training program entitled “Level Up Your Business: Using Gamification to Drive SME Growth in the Digital Era.” At the initial stage, the PKM team presented the proposed solutions and outlined the technical aspects of the program to the participants. After obtaining their consent, the team proceeded with participatory and discussion-oriented activities in the form of interactive training sessions.

The institutional approach was operationalized through interactive interviews designed to identify the challenges faced by participants and to uncover their specific needs. Meanwhile, the participatory approach was applied through

training activities that emphasized joint learning and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, while the discussion approach facilitated open dialogue between the trainers and participants. The mentoring component further ensured that the traders received continuous guidance and follow-up support throughout the program. The participants of this PKM initiative consisted of 26 members representing the Association of Flower Traders at Rawa Belong Market, along with the market management authority. The program was carried out in three major stages, namely the initial stage, the process stage, and the evaluation stage. In the initial stage, the PKM team conducted a needs analysis and formulated the problems faced by the participants, particularly regarding their knowledge gaps in social media marketing and gamification. The process stage represented the core training activities, where participants were introduced to gamification concepts, relevant tools, and their applications in the SME context. During this stage, interactive simulations and case-based discussions were employed to reinforce learning and to provide participants with practical exposure to the concept. Finally, the evaluation stage was conducted as a joint reflection between the PKM team and the participants to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program's implementation. The insights generated from this stage were used as valuable feedback to improve future PKM initiatives.

This initiative qualifies as an international PKM program, as it involved guest speakers from two different countries, namely Malaysia and Indonesia. Such collaboration provided participants with broader perspectives and deeper insights. The invited experts delivered sessions on several key topics, including understanding the engagement challenge for SMEs, addressing the attention crisis and why SMEs must compete differently, exploring the psychology behind gamification, and presenting practical gamification examples for SMEs. In addition to the training activities, the program also incorporated pre-test and post-test assessments. Data obtained from these assessments were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The pre-test results served as a baseline measurement of participants' prior knowledge regarding gamification, while the post-test results were used to evaluate their level of understanding after the training program. This method enabled the PKM team to systematically assess the effectiveness of the program in enhancing the knowledge and skills of participants, particularly in the application of gamification for business growth and competitiveness.



Figure 2. Stages of PKM Activities

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community engagement program was conducted on April 26, 2025, under the theme “Level Up Your Business: Using Gamification to Drive SME Growth in the Digital Era.” A total of 26 participants attended the session, consisting of individual flower traders as well as representatives of the traders' association at Rawa Belong Market. The first topic discussed in the program was “Big Brands Use Gamification to Engage Customers.” This session aimed to provide participants with an understanding of how modern marketing strategies, particularly those adopted by well-established global brands, leverage gamification to capture consumer attention and foster customer loyalty. Through this material, participants were introduced to the use of game-like elements such as points, rewards, and challenges as tools to enhance customer interaction and create more engaging shopping experiences. By examining real-world practices from major brands, flower traders were encouraged to adapt these creative ideas within the specific context of their flower businesses. The discussion further emphasized that gamification is not merely a promotional tool but also a mechanism for building stronger emotional connections with customers, thereby increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases and customer retention. Moreover, this session highlighted the importance of continuous innovation in navigating today's competitive marketplace. The trainers emphasized that relying solely on product quality is no longer sufficient to ensure business sustainability. Instead, flower traders must complement their products with interactive communication strategies and customer engagement initiatives that are both relevant and appealing to contemporary consumer expectations. By aligning their business practices with gamification-driven approaches, the traders at Rawa Belong Market are expected to enhance their competitiveness and strengthen their positioning in the digital economy.



Figure 3. Presentation Material “Understanding the Engagement Challenge for SMEs”

Another key session delivered in the program was “The Psychology Behind Gamification,” which aimed to provide participants with a deeper understanding of the concept of gamification and its applications in both everyday life and business contexts. By integrating psychological principles with game elements, this material encouraged participants to explore how game mechanics can effectively motivate behavior, increase engagement, and optimize performance outcomes. The session emphasized practical applications of gamification by introducing traders to the use of elements such as points, badges, and challenges to create more enjoyable and productive business experiences. Through this learning process, participants were guided to recognize how psychological drivers—such as motivation, reward-seeking, and social recognition—can be harnessed to design customer engagement strategies that are both meaningful and sustainable. By applying these concepts, flower traders were encouraged to develop more effective approaches to attract customers, strengthen loyalty, and build long-term relationships within an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The outcomes of this session indicated a significant improvement in the traders’ comprehension of gamification. Flower traders at Rawa Belong Market came to understand that gamification represents the application of game-like elements in non-game contexts to enhance motivation and engagement. They realized that gamification could be incorporated into their marketing strategies in practical ways, such as offering rewards or incentives to loyal customers, or providing bonuses to customers who refer friends to purchase flowers. By adopting these strategies, traders could create more enjoyable, interactive, and memorable shopping experiences, which in turn would increase customer retention and strengthen brand loyalty. In addition, participants were introduced to the importance of leveraging technology to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the gamification strategies implemented. Tools such as customer engagement metrics, digital reward systems, and online tracking mechanisms were highlighted as essential components for measuring success. With this knowledge, the traders were expected to be more innovative in utilizing gamification not only to increase sales but also to build closer and more enduring relationships with their customers. Ultimately, this enhanced understanding positions the flower traders at Rawa Belong Market to remain competitive and responsive to the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital era



Figure 4. Community Service Activity

4. CONCLUSION

The key conclusion derived from this community engagement program is that the utilization of gamification as a developmental strategy for SMEs, particularly flower traders at Rawa Belong Market, demonstrates that digital technologies incorporating game elements can serve as an innovative approach to enhance consumer engagement. Through the participation of 26 flower traders, the program successfully provided participants with new insights into the concept of gamification, the psychological foundations underpinning its use, and practical examples of its application in digital marketing. Prior to the training, the majority of traders employed social media solely for conventional promotional activities, without recognizing the potential of gamification as a tool to create more interactive and enjoyable shopping experiences. Following the training, however, participants developed an understanding of how mechanisms such as points, challenges, and incentives can be utilized to foster customer loyalty while simultaneously expanding market reach. This shift in perspective has encouraged traders to be more adaptive toward digitalization, equipping them with creative and relevant marketing strategies to remain competitive in the modern business environment. The success of this program highlights that digital literacy and innovative marketing strategies are critical for SMEs seeking to thrive in today's competitive marketplace. Nevertheless, the implementation of gamification requires continuous mentoring and support to ensure that traders are able to consistently apply the concept and measure its effectiveness over time. With such sustained guidance, gamification holds the potential to become a strategic solution not only for enhancing the competitiveness of flower traders at Rawa Belong Market but also as a replicable model for other SME sectors. Ultimately, this initiative underscores the role of gamification in

driving sustainable economic growth by enabling SMEs to innovate, engage customers more effectively, and secure long-term business resilience.

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